

## The service cluster: shipping, inspection, finance and law

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The commodity trade depends on a network of service providers, part of which is located in Zug. Shipping companies and ship brokers charter the vessels that carry the cargoes, while inspection companies verify the quantity and quality of the goods at loading and discharge. Banks finance the transactions and insurers cover the risks of transport and credit. Law firms, tax advisers and auditors support the traders in all of these activities. The cantonal economic promotion office names shipping, transport, finance, insurance and legal advice among the services of the cluster.<sup>1</sup>

The move of SGS from Geneva to Baar in 2025 and 2026, described in Part C, has brought to the canton the headquarters of the largest inspection company in the world, whose services are an integral part of the commodity trade.<sup>2</sup> The inspection certificates issued by such companies are among the key documents of the trade. They are required by the letters of credit under which the banks pay the sellers and form the basis on which disputes about quantity and quality are resolved. The presence of the headquarters of the leading inspection company in the same canton as one of the leading traders is a symbol of the density of the trading ecosystem that has formed in Zug, even if the inspections themselves take place in the ports and terminals of the world.

The service cluster is smaller in Zug than in Geneva, where the banks that specialise in commodity finance and the shipping companies are more numerous. It is nonetheless substantial and grows with the trading cluster. For the practitioner, the presence of the service providers in the canton facilitates the work. The banks, insurers and inspection companies with which a trader deals are often represented in Zug or Zurich, so that the negotiation of a financing or the resolution of a dispute can be conducted with local counterparts.

## 1 Notes

1. Kanton Zug, Volkswirtschaftsdirektion, "Consumer Goods and Commodities": services include shipping, transportation, finance, insurance and legal advisory. ↩
2. zentralplus, "SGS zieht von Genf nach Zug – und sorgt für Kritik": SGS the world's largest inspection company; swissinfo.ch, "SGS eröffnet neuen Hauptsitz in Baar ZG im Januar 2026". ↩

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